

Bement Parents' Association October Meeting Notes

October 24, 2011

Present: Sara Harvey, Lee Rubeck, Terri Mayrand, Meg Clark, Diana Stiles, Julia Flannery, Carole Pennock, Shelley Jackson

- 1. School Store:** PA needs to purchase a new supply of blazer patches. This apparently has been a PA responsibility historically, but wasn't noted in anyone's information. Meg was unable to find any previous order information that could be followed up on, although Wendy, Marty, Terri, Diana and Julia were all very helpful in this quest. Meg called Nixon Awards in Indian Orchard, who sent a price quote and samples. Samples were shown and decision was made to order a felted embroidered patch, but to reduce the patch size from 3.5" to 3" and not have the iron-on adhesive on the back. A quantity of 250 patches was determined to be sufficient, and there is no need to replace current patches. As blazers come in to the Blazer Exchange with the old Bement crest, Meg has been pulling them from stock, so that hopefully all old-crest patches will no longer be on blazers. School Store had a successful Parents' Day, totalling \$1552 in sales.
- 2. Online Auction:** The School was recently given a high-end art lamp by parent Janna Ugone to raise funds for flood relief, in a generous response to Shelley's letters updating the community on the flood damage incurred to the campus this summer. Original thought was to auction this lamp and give the proceeds to flood relief. Questions were raised as to how the funds would be allocated, whether the PA should handle an item given to the School specifically for flood relief. If we don't have a venue to sell/auction it, suggestion was made that perhaps item could be sold in her shop, with the proceeds then given to flood relief. Diana will be in touch with her, visit her shop and find out more about the specifics of this generous gift to the school.

A fairly large number of items come in to the School through the solicitation letters for the Spring Fling Auction, and what to do with these items to raise funds versus turning them away? Is it possible/feasible to run an online auction for these items to optimize these donations and possibly open it up to a larger community? Sara will put a "Help Wanted" ad into the Look Aheads to hopefully find a volunteer (or volunteers) to chair such an event. Discussion of whether Bement should run this auction, or to hire an online auction house where we would give over a percentage of proceeds in lieu of having to administrate it all ourselves. Merits of this would be that 1) we have never run an actual online auction and would be able to observe, make notes, and see if this is even a worthwhile or productive event for our community and 2) the reasoning behind ending the Spring Fling Auction was due to a severe shortage of volunteer manpower and to administer this all on our own might be bringing back that requirement. Sara will look into online auction houses such as Bidding For Good, etc. Shelley also suggested talking to Linden Hill school, as they run an online auction there. There is also an online auction component to the Maestrosoft software used by Bement for Spring Fling auction that Bement does not own that might be considered, although last year the Auction committee was looking to get away from that software because of several shortcomings it has. Sara will also touch base with Fred Bliss on computer and/or software issues.

Timing of this auction would be ideal for a February or winter event, however it is

probably too late to prepare for that. Spring would be best, to somewhat coincide with Spring Fling Saturday. How long should the auction run - days? weeks? A monthly auction with few items was suggested, but considered to put the PA too much into continual "ask" mode. The PA is trying to be very mindful of keeping fundraising to useful things: Hillside Pizza, book sales, etc.

3. **5th Grade Fundraising:** After a successful Chili/Hot Dog sale at the Fall Bazaar, the 5th grade is interested in doing a basket raffle and Bake Sale to raise funds to offset the costs of their Nature's Classroom trip in the spring. Some concerns raised about continual fundraising requests, or whether solicitation would be involved. Discussion also of the actual costs of this trip - are parents told well ahead of time, do the kids have an idea therefore of how much each dollar raised takes off individual bills? This information should be found out and given to 5th grade parents so that they are able to make these determinations on their own. The Officers very much love the enthusiasm & energy of the 5th grade parents in this endeavour!

4. **Parents' Day:** Received the bill for Duncan Laird's talk. The talk was well-attended though did suffer from audio difficulties. There were mixed reviews from parents but it did spark conversation and a dynamic Q&A afterwards.
 Shelley and Diana suggested an idea to consider for Parents' Day next year. At DA they had out bulbs for parents to plant (Deerfield Daffodils) and Bement could sponsor "Bement Bulbs" and have a planting activity at Parents' Day as a beautification project.
 Sara noted a "Paparazzi Booth" in the PTO magazine that suggested a red-carpet photo booth for families to take photos together on Parents' Day. This also prompted a brief discussion of school pictures; a number of parents are not overly thrilled with Grynn & Barrett's work and perhaps it is time to find another vendor. Suggestion was made to perhaps at the very least recruit parent volunteers to help make sure hair is combed, ties are straight, etc.

5. **Michele Torres Event:** Parent Michele Torres so enjoyed the presentation by NASA astronaut and parent Cady Coleman at a Friday morning meeting that she wished to pursue a parent event so other parents could also share in Cady's informative talk. She had a conversation with Cady about finding a venue for parents, however we cannot fundraise directly on Cady/NASA because she is a government employee. Cady will look at her calendar and talk more with Michele. Would it be possible to use Memorial Hall in Deerfield, or a local planetarium (Amherst or DA)?

6. **Fall Bazaar:** Total so far is \$2316.97. Cressey still has a couple hundred dollars to collect. Bake Sale total was \$452.18. Invoice has arrived for tent permit, but additional expenses are not yet tallied so there isn't a final total yet. It was a great, fun day and Cressey and her crew did a terrific job, as always!

7. **Genevieve's Gift Wrap:** Giftwrap delivery is due just prior to Thanksgiving break, hopefully by Nov. 16th, and we will distribute orders on the 17th and 18th. Income from this event is approximately \$1300. It was noted that 40% of sales comes back to Bement and this should be more thoroughly noted on the exterior of the flyer packet. Will definitely make that well-known in Look Ahead, with information on how to order year-round online.

- 8. Hillside Pizza/B&N:** Pizza flyers went out and are posted online. Orders should be received by the 10th for pickup on the 18th. If we order 300 items, then we will receive \$6 back on each sale. Suggestions of how folks use these were made to promote sales: Roll cookie dough into a log, freeze and have slice & bake on hand. Stock up on gift certificates for busy days, or freeze a take-n-bake pizza.
- Book Fair is organizing. Lee has contacted Fine Arts department about any artwork or performances they'd like to share. Performances are in the Café and are short, 15 minutes. A craft & story are done in the Childrens' section in the a.m. - perhaps a Bement faculty would read? For sales up to \$2000, we will receive 10%; for \$2-10,000 we would receive 15%. Suggested we make a bookmark to hand out with the Book Fair ID information. Meg and Lee will work on this on Monday using the "Bement Believes in Books" artwork. As this book fair can also be utilized by families & friends online and in other parts of the country, this info will also go out in an iContact and be posted on Facebook for alumni.
- 9. Upcoming Event Ideas:** The following event ideas had been brought to Sara by various parents for future consideration.
- Pig Roast: Everyone loves this idea, but it will most likely be something for next fall, instead of this year.
- Moms/Margaritas Event: Held at Bridgeside Grille, for \$25 all the margaritas you'd like plus social time with other moms. Similar events are possible at Sierra Grille (beer tasting dinner) or Chandler's Tavern (Martinis & Manicures, or tastings) Does a "Mom's Night Out" event exclude the men too much? Sara will talk with a few dads who had ideas to see if there is a good mens' event as well.
- Blue Heron Cooking Classes: Only available to a small group at one time.
- Valentine's Day was suggested for couples. Unknown what the profit margin is, especially with only 10-12 at a time participating.
- Meals-to-Go with Rose-Ann: this will get filed away as an idea for later, as the kitchen has had a very hectic autumn and this would impose too much on Rose-Ann and her staff to currently consider.

Next Meeting will be:

Friday, November 11 at 2pm
in the Middle Dining Room